

LESSON 4

EARLY CAREER AND MARRIAGE

Muhammad's uncle, Abu Talib, like most other Quraish, was a businessman. He took Muhammad (S) with him on business trips. Abu Talib did not want to leave Muhammad (S) alone. Also, he wanted to teach him the rules of trade.

As a boy of eleven, on one of his trips to Syria, Muhammad (S) met a Christian monk Buhaira. Buhaira told Abu Talib that Muhammad(S) would have a great future and that he must specially safeguard him.

When Muhammad (S) grew up, he started his own business. He had no money of his own. He was well known for his honesty. People wanted him to use their money for business and share in the profit.

At that time there was a rich widow living in Makkah. Her name was Khadijah. Because of her good nature, she was called *Tahirah*, "the pure one". She asked Muhammad (S) to do business on her behalf. Muhammad (S) agreed and took a caravan of merchandise for Khadijah.

Khadijah sent her slave, Maisarah, with him. During the travels, Muhammad (S) treated the slave very kindly. Maisarah also saw how honest Muhammad (S) was. Maisarah noticed many good qualities in Muhammad (S) which no other Makkan possessed. He also saw that a cloud protected Muhammad (S) from the heat of the summer sun.

A Christian monk named Nastur met Muhammad(S) and Maisarah in Syria. He was very impressed by Muhammad (S). He told Maisarah that Muhammad (S) had all the signs of prophethood. Maisarah also saw many other miracles of Muhammad (S). More than miracles, he was impressed by Muhammad's beautiful manners and charming personality. He discovered that Muhammad (S) was both fair and honest in his business dealings.

Muhammad (S) returned to Makkah after this successful business trip with a big profit from Khadijah's merchandise. On his return, Maisarah told Khadijah what he had observed. He told her how Muhammad (S) was different from other people whom Maisarah had met during his travels or had seen in Makkah. Khadijah was so impressed by Muhammad (S) that she proposed marriage to him.

She was forty years old and a widow with three children. Muhammad (S) was twenty-five and still unmarried. Muhammad (S) accepted the proposal. He wanted a wife who was honest, had good manners, and was kind. They remained married for twenty-five years until the death of Khadijah separated them. They loved and respected each other. It was an ideal marriage. The Prophet (S) had six children with her. She had the honor of being the first person to accept Islam. She was a great support for Muhammad (S) in his mission as Allah's prophet.

The marriage with Khadijah made Muhammad (S) a wealthy man but he was not interested in wealth. He wanted to help the poor and the needy. Khadijah presented Muhammad (S) with a slave, Zaid. Muhammad (S) freed Zaid immediately and asked him to go back to his parents. Zaid's parents came to take him with them but Zaid was so attached to his kind master that he never left. He was one of the first Muslims and became a close *Sahabi* (Companion) of the Prophet (S).

Khadijah was a very generous woman. She loved Muhammad (S) and was ready to do everything for him. Both Muhammad (S) and Khadijah gave much of their wealth away and freed their slaves.

Points of review:

1. Muhammad (S) learned business from his uncle, Abu Talib, and became a successful businessman.
2. At the age of twenty-five, Muhammad (S) married Khadijah. They had six children.
3. Muhammad (S) and Khadijah gave away much of their wealth and freed their slaves.

Words to remember:

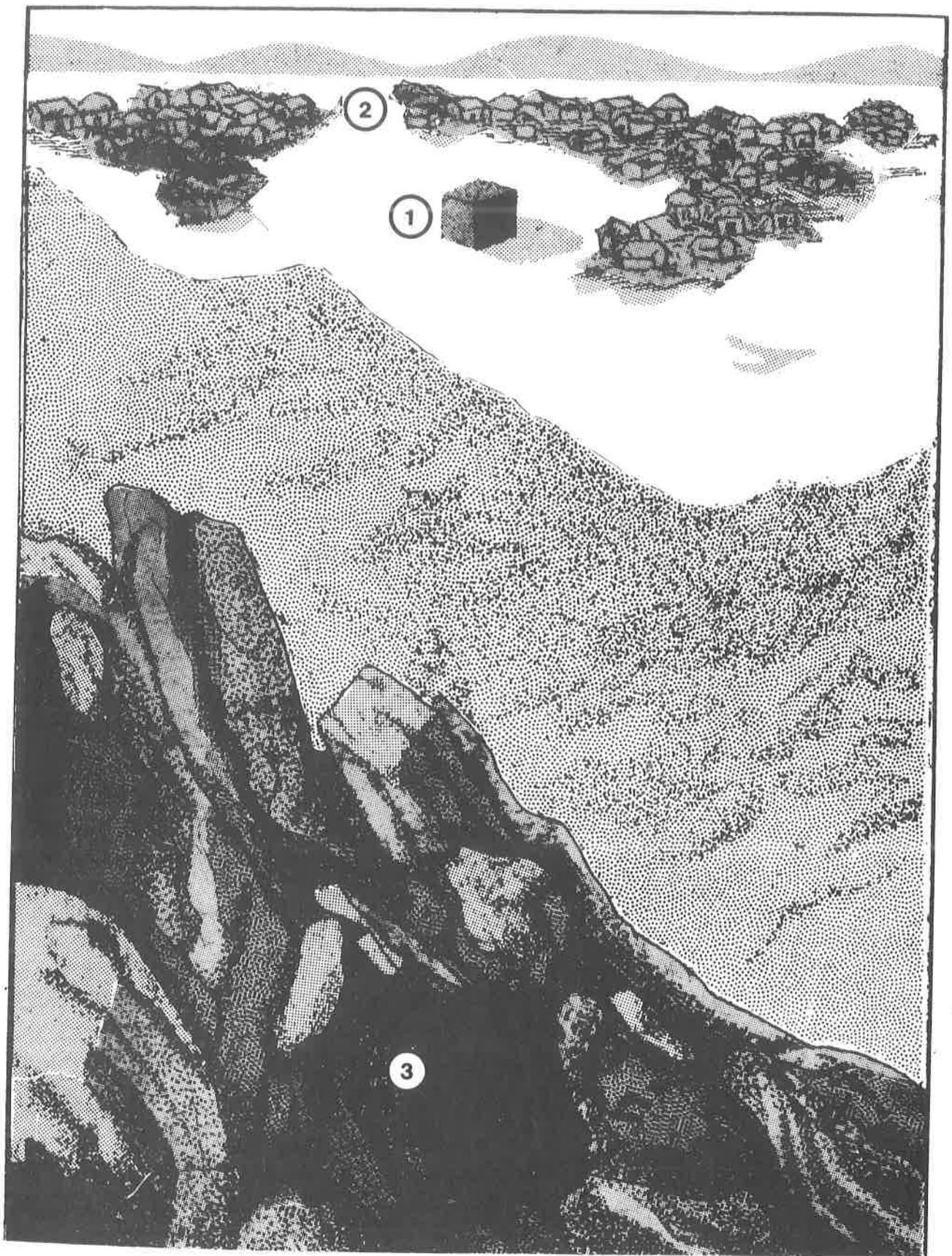
Monk, *Sahabi*, *Tahira*.

Important names

Buhaira, Khadijah, Maisarah, Zaid.

Quaranic Study:

1. Islam permits trade, encourages charity, and prohibits usury. Read *al-Baqara* 2:275-76
2. The Quran encourages a special kind of trade. Read *al-Saff* 61:10-13 and see what that trade is.



1. The Kabah 2. Old city of Makkah 3. Cave of Hira (Bio-visual, Hyderabad)